

WEEKLY BOARD REPORT



NWRA Weekly Board Report 2-9-2018

Capitol Hill

The Senate arrived at a bipartisan two-year budget deal this week that, in addition to setting forth a framework for federal appropriations, includes tax extenders legislation supported by NWRA. The provisions incorporated extend for one year the tax credits for alternative fuel vehicle refueling infrastructure and facilities producing energy from certain renewable resources as well as excise tax credits relating to the use of alternative fuels. Congress had to pass another continuing resolution to keep the government open before a midnight Thursday evening deadline when the current funding package was slated to run out. (Due to debate in the Senate going past midnight, there was a brief shutdown overnight, but the government reopened in the morning.) Conventional wisdom in Washington had been that tax extenders would not be taken up by Congress until a lame duck session following the November elections, so the inclusion of extenders with the budget deal provides welcome certainty for those impacted including the waste and recycling industry.

Jim Riley participated in the National Association of Manufacturers' Energy and Environmental Policy Committee Meeting February 5 where he heard from Bill Wehrum and Mandy Gunasekara of the EPA and Daniel Simmons of the Department of Energy on the latest developments from both agencies. He also attended the House Small Business Committee's Annual Open House February 6 where he spoke one-on-one with Chairman Steve Chabot (R-Ohio) and Reps. Steve King (R-Iowa), Roger Marshall (R-Kansas), and John Curtis (R-Utah) and committee tax staffer Rob Yavor about issues of concern to the industry. Later that day, Riley attended a meet and greet for Bech Bruun, a candidate running in the open Texas 27th congressional district currently held by Rep. Blake Farenthold (R) who is retiring.

NWRA signed on to a letter from the Coalition to Save Local Businesses, of which NWRA is a member, in support of the "Save Local Business Act" (H.R. 3441) introduced by Rep. Bradley Byrne (R-Ala.) This legislation seeks once and for all to define what constitutes a "joint employer" under the National Labor Relations Act in response to the National Labor Relations Board's decisions in this area.

Chapter Activities

Northeast Region: *Steve Changaris, Regional Director*

The **Maryland Chapter's** Slow Down to Get Around (SDTGA) bill was heard by committee. More than a dozen people testified in support with no opposition. The legislation will receive another hearing in the other chamber next week.

The **Connecticut Chapter** supports the recommendations from the state's Task Force to Study Methods to Reduce Packaging that Becomes Solid Waste. Chapter leaders along with chapter and headquarters staff are developing communications tools and strategies to support the recommendation in favor of improving existing recycling programs as opposed to endorsing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) provisions for packaging waste.

Massachusetts Chapter staff began tracking bills being released from committees of original reference for further consideration this current legislative session which ends December 31 this year. Three bills of concern already have been released, one of which seeks to require local governments to impose a 600 lbs. per year per capita weight cap on wastes produced by their citizens or face state penalties.

Members working in **Rhode Island**, along with others, have formally requested a meeting with City of Providence officials about recent changes to early morning hours of service for recyclables and waste collections.

Midwest Region: *Peggy Macenas, Regional Director*

The **Wisconsin, Ohio, and Kentucky** chapters' member legislative committees tracked and reviewed legislation supported by ALEC to develop a model ordinance on plastic bag disposal bans.

The **Ohio Chapter's** members testified in support of the chapter-initiated Slow Down to Get Around (Move Over) legislation on February 7. Members continue to review the Ohio Material Management Council's draft report to the legislature that includes recommendations from the Organization of Solid Waste Districts of Ohio on changing the Ohio Solid Waste Management Plan's recycling goals and the demand for data. Members are working together on responding to legislation that would increase Solid Waste Fees to fund the Soil and Water Conservation Districts and legislation to allow muni's to collect waste service debt by placing on the tax bill.

Minnesota Chapter members met to finalize language to fix the Organized / Franchise / Government Managed state statute, the MN Policy Plan to exempt it from rule making and the Capital Bonding allocation that must consider existing infrastructure before money is allocated for new facilities.

The **Illinois Chapter's** members are working to secure authors for their legislative initiative to tie Hours of Service relief to a Governor's declared emergency has been jacketed and is ready for a sponsor.

The members in **Nebraska** were notified of SDTGA legislation that was introduced and supported by NWRA. Staff worked to secure testimony and letters of support from industry in preparation for a hearing planned for Monday, February 12.

Indiana Chapter members met to discuss bills, solid waste districts and the NWRA Legislator Dinner planned for February 27, 2018.

The **Kansas Chapter's** members are working the Slow Down to Get Around bill through committee. Members worked successfully with KDOT on amendments.

Sunbelt Region: *Kirsti Nelson, Regional Director*

The **Arizona Chapter** reports that amendments to HB2166 and SB1146, which reduced vehicle tax fees over what was originally proposed, were passed in the two transportation committees. The alternative fuel vehicles' tax exemption that is currently in place will expire in 2020 when the new tax goes into effect. The chapter is celebrating passage of SB1261, no texting while driving, in the Transportation Committee.

The **North Carolina Chapter's** Legislative Committee was asked for input from the Environmental Resource Commission on whether e-waste is safe to dispose of in Subtitle D landfills. The committee is working on its response.

The **Florida Chapter** is busy at the Capitol supporting or opposing various bills affecting the industry. Included in these are HB33, elevating the offense of texting while driving; PCS/HB879, adding other materials into the definition of recovered material; and HB971, legislation related to reimbursement to customers after service outages.

The **Georgia Chapter** is working diligently in opposition to SB385, which raises landfill hosting fees from one dollar to three dollars. The chapter is also supporting HB673, which penalizes distracted driving by mobile devices.

Future Industry Leaders Alliance: *Kirsti Nelson*

The FILA Board held a call to discuss WasteExpo activities, marketing efforts, and its financial health. The group will be awarding four members with the Leadership Certificate at Expo, all of whom will be recognized at the Awards Breakfast.

Women's Council: *Peggy Macenas*

Committee members continue work on fundraising for the scholarship program. Plans at WasteExpo include: Carts on Display, The Women's' Council's 15th Anniversary, Scholarship awards and a Split the Pot Raffle. In addition, Women's Council is coordinating an education track on how our industry manages disasters.

Healthcare Waste Institute

The American Journal of Infection Control published a paper coauthored by National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA) Vice-President for Technical and Regulatory Affairs Anne Germain entitled, "A Pilot Survey of the US Medical Waste Industry to Determine Training Needs for Safely Handling Highly Infectious Waste." She was joined by Hal Miller and Richard Thompson, members of NWRA's Healthcare Waste Institute (HWI) as well its chair, Selin Hoboy.

Following the 2014-2016 outbreak of the Ebola virus disease (EVD), only a small number of facilities were willing to accept EVD waste. The study determined that complex regulations often left workers and facilities unprepared to handle EVD and other highly infectious waste. The paper provides the results of the study conducted by lead author Aurora Le from the Biosafety and Infectious Disease Training Initiative from the Indiana University School of Public Health.

Safety

The NWRA Safety and Communications committees finalized the planning for NWRA's 2018 Safety Stand Down on Vehicle Backing weeklong event. The material is designed to engage and enable industry employers and employees by providing easy to use vehicle backing safety training material and informational handouts to eliminate vehicle backing crashes in the waste and recycling industry. This is the first of the three Safety Stand Downs scheduled for 2018.

Industry Statistics and Economics

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released employment data late last week. For the waste and recycling industry, employment was at all-time highs in January 2018 at 419,400. The unemployment rate rose in January to an unexpected level not seen since mid-2015 of 8.2 percent, up dramatically from 3.4 percent the previous month. In support of this, average hourly wages reached their highest level at \$26.36 in December 2017. By most accounts, the industry appears to be on solid economic ground for the coming year.

Communications

The communications team arranged an interview between Darrell Smith and the Detroit Free Press about a recent study from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality that showed an increase in the amount of waste coming into the state. That interview is expected to run in the Detroit Free Press next week.

NWRA distributed several press releases highlighting our members support for [Slow Down to Get Around legislation in Maryland](#), the [paper coauthored](#) by Anne Germain, and [NWRA's support for more than \\$1 billion in tax credits](#) that were included in the budget bill that Congress recently approved. A press release was also sent announcing [NWRA's upcoming Safety Stand Down](#) that begins on February 12.

[Waste360 reported](#) on Anne's paper.